

Message Text

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ACTION ITF-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 VO-03 SCA-01 H-02 AID-05 SR-02

ORM-01 OPR-02 A-01 SS-15 SSO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 SCS-03

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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3296

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 6411

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, RP

SUBJECT: VIETNAMESE REFUGEES ABOARD PANAMANIAN SHIP

REF: A. STATE 107164

B. MANILA 6229

1. AS RESULT OUR NOTE VERBALE REPORTED REF B, GOVERNMENT OF PHILIPPINES ON MAY 12 TOOK THIRTY-FIVE VIETNAMESE REFUGEES OFF SS EURYBATES AND BEGAN TO ACCEPT THEM QUIETLY INTO GROUP WHICH IT IS PROCESSING FOR ASYLUM IN THIS COUNTRY.

2. WHILE THIS WAS BEING ACCOMPLISHED MAY 12, CONSUL GENERAL BETTS RECEIVED TELEPHONE CALL FROM ANTIPPAS OF IATF ADVISING THAT, CONTRARY TO ALL PREVIOUS INSTRUCTIONS AND CONTRARY TO POSITION THIS EMBASSY TOOK WITH GOP PURSUANT TO INSTRUCTIONS REF A, SOMEBODY IN WASHINGTON HAD DECIDED TO MAKE EXCEPTION IN CASE THESE REFUGEES, BECAUSE EURYBATES WAS CARRYING US CARGO. ANTIPPAS ASKED BETTS TO MOVE REFUGEES TO SUBIC AND PROCESS THEM TO GUAM.

3. UPON HEARING THIS DEVELOPMENT, I INSTRUCTED BETTS NOT RPT NOT TO ACT ON BASIS ANTIPPAS PHONE CALL, BUT TO CONSIDER EURYBATES INCIDENT CLOSED, WITH REFUGEES HAVING BEEN TRNSFERRED TO GOP
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RESPONSIBILITY. IT IS MY FIRM CONVICTION THAT CAPRICIOUS

REVERSALS OF POSITIONS ALLEGEDLY TAKEN IN PURSUIT OF
CONSIDERED PRINCIPLES WILL CAUSE ALL OUR ARRANGMENTS
WITH GOP TO UNRAVEL, AND WILL JEOPARDIZE OTHER POSITIONS
WE HAVE TAKEN ON SUCH MATTERS AS ASSERTION OF TITLE TO
VIETNAMESE AND CAMBODIAN MILITARY SHIPS AND AIRCRAFT.

4. MAY 13 MORNING, AFTER ANTIPPAS PHONE CALL MADE, ONE
OF GOP IMMIGRATION OFFICERS CALLED BETTS' DEPUTY AND
ASKED WHETHER WE WOULD TAKE THIRTY-FIVE REFUGEES WHO HAD
BEEN REMOVED FROM EURYBATES. HE SAID THAT IF WE REACTED
NEGATIVELY, REFUGEES WOULD BE PLACED BACK ABOARD VESSEL
AND SAILED TO NEXT PORT OF CALL.

5. IN ACCORDANCE MY INSTRUCTION, BETTS INFORMED GOP
OFFICIAL THROUGH HIS DEPUTY THAT U.S. POSITION REMAINED AS
STATED IN OUR NOTE VERBALE. WE WILL NOW HAVE TO SEE HOW
POSITION DEVELOPS, BUT I WOULD FIND IT QUITE EXTRAORDINARY
IF THESE PEOPLE ARE ACTUALLY PUT BACK ABOARD SHIP ONCE
HAVING BEEN MOVED INTO GOP RECEPTION CENTER.

6. COMMENT: IT IS IMPORTANT WE ATTEMPT TO MAINTAIN SOME
LOGICAL CONSISTENCY IN OUR ACTIONS IN ORDER PROVIDE GOP
WITH RATIONALE TO USE IF IT IS TO RESIST INEVITABLE DEMANDS
FROM NEW INDOCHINESE GOVERNMENTS ON SUCH MATTERS AS SHIPS
AND REFUGEES. IT IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT THAT ABERRATIONS
FROM OUR STATED POLICIES NOT RPT NOT BE DISCUSSED
OVER OPEN INTERNATIONAL TELEPHONE CIRCUITS.

7. PLEASE CONFIRM UNDERSTANDINGS THESE MATTERS BY
CLASSIFIED CABLE SOONEST.
SULLIVAN

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